



Complaints Policy and Procedure

1 Policy statement

1.1 At the Education and Training Foundation ('ETF' which includes SET, the Society for Education and Training), we strive for excellence in everything we do. We are conscious of how we are funded and our need to make sure that all our activities pursue our charitable purposes and the public benefit. Occasionally, we may fall short of the high expectations customers and partners have for us. When that happens, we want to know. This allows us to investigate what has happened and have a chance to rectify any mistakes we may have made. A thorough and transparent complaints policy and supporting procedure help us do this.

1.2 A complaint is a clear expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service provided by ETF, or where ETF has breached legislation or its own policies and processes. Our policy is therefore to:

- provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
- publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
- make sure all complaints are investigated fairly, and in a timely way
- make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
- gather information which helps us to improve what we do.

1.3 This policy does not cover:

1.3.1 complaints from ETF staff, who should use ETF's:

Grievance Policy and Procedure if the aim is to settle employee disputes, arrive at a resolution for all concerned and re-establish positive working relationships.

Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure, for raising issues which may be in the public interest, or concern matters of wrongdoing where the employee feels unable to raise the matter with his / her line manager in the first instance.

Code of Conduct and Standards of Behaviour Policy to report inappropriate workplace behaviour (which can include but is not limited to



bullying and/or harassment; alcohol and substance abuse; theft, dishonesty or fraud; acts of violence, aggression or assault; unacceptable use of obscene or abusive language and purposeful damage of the ETF's or any third-party property.

The policies listed in 1.3.1 can be found on the Policies and Procedures page of The Hub (in the HR folder).

1.3.2 objections to decisions made by ETF which are in line with its policies, Terms and Conditions, etc. for example:

a decision not to award Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) status or Advanced Teacher Status (ATS) (see instead the [Objections Policy](#))

a decision to remove membership, following an investigation (see instead the [Investigation and Disciplinary Policy and Procedures](#))

outcomes following an application for reasonable adjustments / allocation of support (see instead the [QTLS and ATS reasonable adjustments policy and procedure](#)).

The policies listed in 1.3.2 can all be found on the [Policies and Procedure page](#) of SET website.

2 Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure covers:

- all services and products which we deliver directly or by contracted third parties on our behalf ('partners' or 'suppliers')
- the behaviour and conduct of ETF employees, Board members, contracted third parties and advisory groups representing ETF.

3 Procedure: Informal complaints

3.1 In many cases, an issue is best resolved informally between the two parties in which the problem pertains to. An informal, practical, and sensible approach should be taken to informally resolve the issue. The process for this is:

- a) The individual raises the issue verbally or by email with the ETF member of staff, either directly or via a commissioned supplier.
- b) The ETF member of staff, or a nominated colleague will respond to the complainant within 5 working days of receiving the complaint.
- c) The complainant has 5 working days, after the ETF staff member has responded, to confirm they are satisfied with the resolution, or to request



d) Investigation of the complaint will then proceed.



- f) Complainant will receive a response from ETF within 5 working days of the end of the Director's review.
- g) Complainant has 5 working days, after the response has been issued to confirm they are satisfied with the resolution, or to request the complaint be escalated. If neither of these are received, it will be assumed the case is closed.
- h) The investigation and subsequent escalation or resolution of the complaint will be logged accordingly.

Timeframe: Up to 35 working days from complainant's request to escalate to Stage 3.

Method: written escalation requested, followed by consideration by the Director, and written formal response.

Stage 3 Review by a more senior Director (or other Executive Board member)

If the complainant feels that the issue has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 2, they can take the decision to escalate their complaint to Stage 3:

- a) Complainant confirms within 5 working days that they are not content with the proposed course of action, explanation, or resolution. Board/Dir/BoD (reg day)-1 (s)-6 (t)-3 (ha



review of the substance of the case and its handling. This will usually take 10 working days.

h) The complainant will receive a response from ETF within 5 working days of the end of the senior Director's review.

i) The senior Director's decision is final.

j) The investigation and subsequent final outcome will be logged accordingly.

Timeframe: Up to 35 working days from complaint's request to escalate to Stage 3.

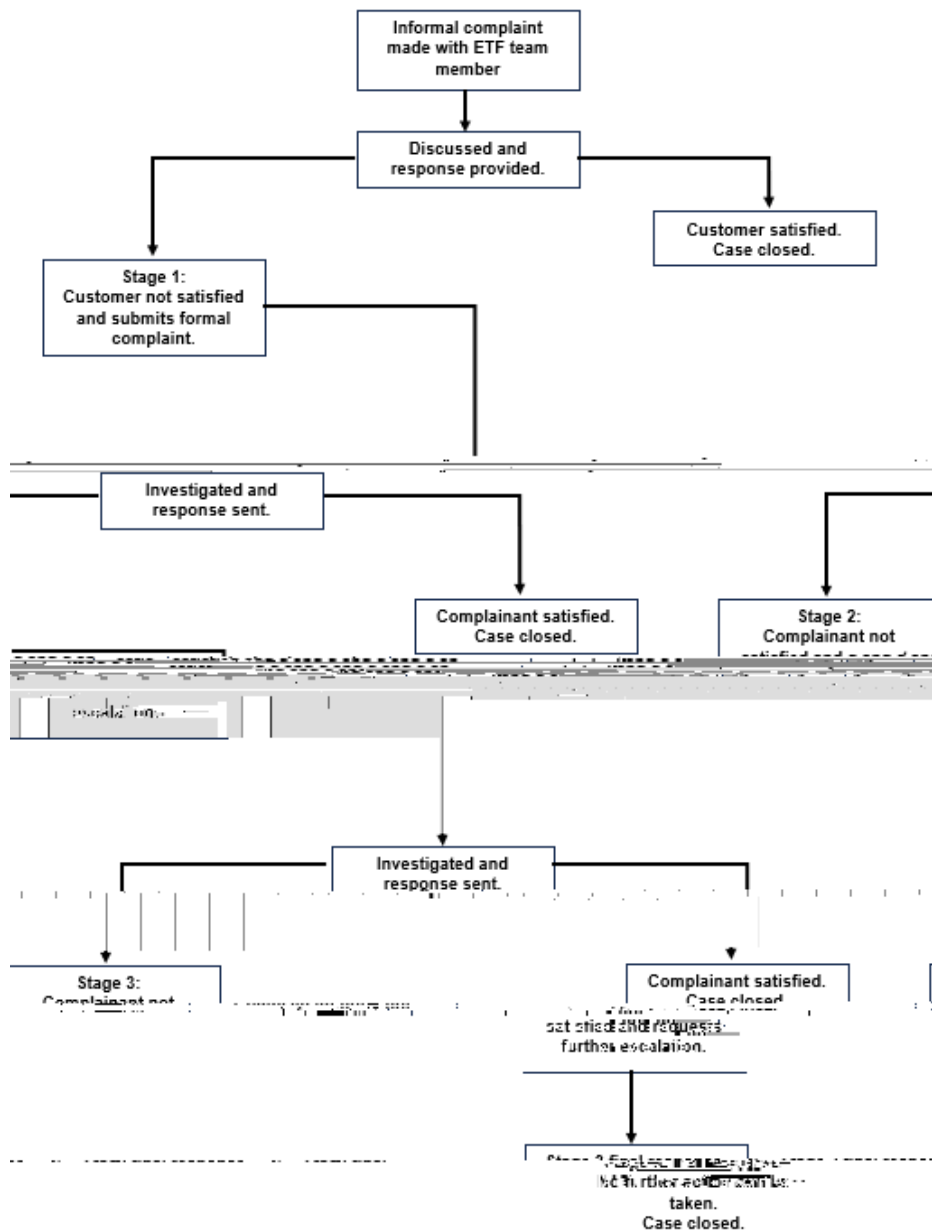
Method: written dissatisfaction notice, supported by optional additional written submission or discussion, followed by the senior Director's consideration, and written formal response.

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demands on resources where the complainant has already been informed that the complaint is outside of ETF's remit or charitable purpose (e.g. requesting we act as an FE regulatory body; requesting we investigate complaints against HE providers, etc.).

5.3 The decision as to whether a complaint is considered to be vexatious rests with a senior Director of the area dealing with the complaint. ETF will cease to investigate any complaint as soon as it considered to be vexatious and will notify the complainant accordingly.



- ETF’s Leadership Team receives anonymised reports of ETF formal complaints as part of their regular meetings
- ETF’s Board of Trustees receives (at least) an annual report.

Version 1.0 Authorisation and approval:

Drafted by: Paul Murtagh

Title: Head of Compliance

Date: 12.05.22



Approved by: Board	Title: ETF Board of Trustees	Date: 07.06.22
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Revision History: Timing of revision and outline of frequency of revision required					
Version	Date	Description of changes	Reason	Prepared by	Approval from
2.0	10.11.22	Updated section 3.3	SET Objections Policy name changed and re-published	Head of Compliance	Director of Corporate Services
2.1	29.07.24	Inclusion of Assoc. Directors at stage 2 and replacing CEO with Exec. Directors at stage 3	New OD structure	Head of Data Protection and Compliance	Executive Director of Corporate Services

Policy Owner:
Executive Director of Corporate Services

Due Date for Review:
1 July 2027